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PAVEWAYS

CWT Earns 2013 CARF Accreditation

For the fifth survey in a row, CWT received CARF accreditation with no recommendations. The program also garnered more than 20 accolades from this year's surveyors, William Sandoz and Cherie Johnson.

The successful survey, which took place from July 10th to July 12th, came as a result of a staff-wide effort to earn the honor, which recognizes quality of services of rehabilitation facilities in North and South America, Asia, Africa and Europe, according to CARF International.

Among the strengths noted in the survey summary is the program's focus on employment as a

long-term benefit to veterans' mental and overall health, as well as its use of strong business and employer connections within the community.

Program Director Dr. Stephanie Kiewlich and Clinical Coordinator/Staff Psychologist Dr. Stephanie Wong were specifically praised for their leadership skills and commitment to the program, as well as their focus on helping veterans pursue creative leisure activities to supple-

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Fitness Challenge Sparks Action in TR Houses

Residents in the Transitional Residence houses enjoyed a home-cooked feast on October 7th to celebrate their recently completed Fitness Challenge.

The Fitness Challenge, designed for the TR program by VA Recreation Therapist Eric Chin, spanned three months and aimed to assess and improve upon the physical, dietary and social habits of veterans living in the two houses.

TR residents were tasked with keeping track of every decision they made that related to diet, physical fitness, recreational and social activity, and community awareness, and were given points based on

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TR Residents show off their house pride.

PHOTO KAMELA DIN

TR Resident Moves on, but Holds Strong to CWT Ties

When his two oldest sons brought him to the VA in Menlo Park two years ago, John Montgomery just asked them to wish him well. Living in and out of shelters for five years after relapsing with drug and alcohol addiction, Montgomery knew that it was time for something to change.

"I was out there for 44 years, trying to put Vietnam behind me," he said. "I didn't realize I was hurting myself by not dealing with it."

Following a 14-year stretch of sobriety during which he worked in construction and coached little league, Montgomery had fallen back on drugs and alcohol, and his sons decided it was time to get him help. "They pretended we were going Christmas shopping," he said, explaining that once he realized the mall was not the destination, he readily came to terms with what he needed to do.

Now, after working with CWT



John Montgomery

PHOTO KAMELA DIN

over the past two years, Montgomery is headed down a new path. Two years sober and moving into his own apartment for the first time since 2006, he was assigned to food service at the VA Menlo Park and is making plans to get a competitive job at PAD, all while keeping his CWT connections alive and healthy.

A member of the Transitional Residence community, Montgomery found strong connections and support to fall back on amongst his housemates. "I have never felt more comfortable around a group of men," he said in praise of his house-

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Honoring Extended Service: Ron Robinson

Ron Robinson never stops moving. A calm exterior belies an unstoppable energy within. From his daily long-distance runs to his quest to keep learning, Robinson pushes himself to keep trying new things because, as he says, “You’re not supposed to stop moving.”

Robinson is marking his 20th year with CWT. After starting in Palo Alto in 1993 with what was then known as the Veterans Workshop program, he moved with the program to Menlo Park, where he continued working as a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist. For a veteran of the Air Force who moved every couple years or so for most of his life, staying put for two decades is a big deal.

Robinson’s father was in the military, so he and his four siblings became accustomed to moving to new states and countries on a regular basis. Over the years, he attended five different elementary schools, two different middle schools and three separate high schools. Among his many homes over the years were South Carolina, Japan, Alaska and Greece.

While in South Carolina, he earned his Master’s degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, specializing in blindness, at the University of South Carolina. He also earned his Education Specialist Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and worked as a mental health counselor for six years.

When the position with the VA Palo Alto opened up, Robinson said he had an interest because he had done his practicum at the VA in South Carolina, so he was familiar with how things worked there.

Now in the longest position he has ever held, Robinson says he enjoys the familial feel of CWT.

“We’re almost like a family,” he said. “Sometimes it’s dysfunctional, sometimes it’s downright crazy, but it’s okay because we’re all here to do a job and service veterans.”

“Sometimes it’s dysfunctional, sometimes it’s downright crazy, but it’s okay because we’re all here to do a job and service veterans.”

The lack of turnover in staff over the years is something Robinson said is a testament to how much people care about the program, and that continuity has helped CWT thrive.

“Working with Hedva, JR, Dr. K. and Robin – they know their business,” he said in praise of his long-time colleagues, adding that former Clinical Coordinator Dr. Carma Heitzmann also taught him a lot during her tenure with CWT. “She helped teach me how to deal with people.”

While Robinson appreciates the long-term relationships that have formed within CWT, he also enjoys the culture of constant change. Changes that have come about because of CARF or because of additions to staff excite Robinson because new blood brings new ideas and new energy, which Robinson thrives on.

“Thank God for new blood,” he said. “I love change. It forces one to think outside the box. You have to be flexible.”

Not one to be complacent, he is currently studying for his Certified Disability Management Specialist degree. Robinson, who is already a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor, says that reading the Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling is one of the things that has inspired him to keep reaching toward new achievements.

“I read this and it keeps me motivated to keep learning about new developments in counseling,” he said.

Between working for CWT and studying for yet another degree, Robinson manages to find time to run between seven and eight miles each day, with longer runs on the weekends. An avid outdoorsman, he coached his daughter’s track and field team for years, traveling the country with them for various tournaments, and takes joy in spending time in nature while keeping himself healthy.

“I love going for runs in the rain,” he said, proving that whether he’s exercising his body or his mind, nothing can slow him down.

About this column:

Each quarter, we’ll feature one exceptional staff member who has given more than a decade of service to the CWT program.

New (Everybody Gets a) Job Group!

Get counseling from instructors and collaborate with peers in a special weekly course focusing on job hunting skills, applications, interviewing and more. CWT Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists will provide guest lectures.

Group meets every Friday from 10:45 am to 11:45 am in Building 321, Room A-136. Course runs from November 15 to February 14, and is open to all veterans receiving mental health (outpatient or residential) services from the VA Palo Alto Health Care System.

For more information, contact Kristen McDonald, Ph.D, at (650) 493-5000 ext. 22691 or Reynold Kramer at (650) 493-5000 ext. 25007.

Jesse's Job Picks from the Resource Room



Working closely with veterans every day in the CWT Resource Room, Job Developer Jesse Lee gets a firsthand look at who is hiring and what they are looking for in employees. He shared his picks for companies hiring this holiday season.

"Because it is coming into the holiday shopping season, the best bet for quick employment is seasonal work," Lee said. "Though Target, Costco and Walmart are three of the biggest employers, any store that receives a lot of business during the holidays is a good bet."

Lee added that most seasonal job positions are described as "seasonal sales associate" or some similar variation.

Here are his top five hiring companies this quarter:

1. **Target**
2. **Costco**
3. **Walmart**
4. **Panda Express**
5. **Allied Barton**

Lee said that Panda Express seems to be hiring all over the Bay Area under the job title "Service and Kitchen Team."

Allied Barton, he added, joined the 100,000 Jobs Mission, which is a coalition of companies committed to hiring at least 100,000 US Military Veterans by 2020. He advised, however, that most security jobs require an updated "Guard Card." Part of the process in obtaining a Guard Card involves a criminal history background check, completion of a 40-hour training course and processing fees. To check out the Security Guard Fact Sheet, visit the following website: http://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/guard_fact.shtml

Looking for a healthier option for holiday meals? Try this recipe from The Food Network.

Featured Recipe: Gaston's "Grandma's Ham"

Transitional Residence community member Gaston Daugherty shared his family recipe for bone-in ham, glazed with spices— the perfect dish for the upcoming holiday season.

Ingredients:

- 1 ham (bone-in)
- Cloves
- 1 bottle syrup
- 1 bottle honey
- 1 can pineapple slices

Equipment:

- 1 Deep pan
- Aluminum foil

Directions:

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Place ham in deep pan. Place cloves on top of ham, spacing them 2 – 3 inches apart. Cover ham (including sides) with ½ bottle of syrup and ½ bottle of honey. Pack brown sugar around top and sides of ham. Spread whole jar of pineapple slices on top of ham.

Cover ham with aluminum foil and cook for 15 minutes per pound of ham. Uncover ham for the last 15 minutes of cooking.

Hand carve ham and pour a homemade glaze made of remaining ingredients over it. Enjoy!

Garlic Roasted Chicken

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 skin-on, boneless chicken breasts (about 1 1/2 pounds)
- Salt and ground black pepper
- 2 heads garlic
- 4 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 4 slices sourdough bread, grilled or toasted
- 2 tablespoons white vinegar



Photo Courtesy of The Food Network

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F. Heat the olive oil in a large ovenproof skillet over medium heat. Season the chicken with salt and pepper and cook, skin-side down, until browned, about 5 minutes.

Separate the heads of garlic into cloves but do not peel. Flip the chicken; add the garlic and rosemary to the skillet and transfer to the oven. Roast until the chicken is cooked through but still moist, 15 to 20 more minutes.

Place the bread on a platter and top each slice with a chicken breast. Add the vinegar to the skillet and scrape up any browned bits with a wooden spoon. Add 3 tablespoons water and simmer until the sauce thickens slightly, about 2 minutes. Pour the sauce and garlic over the chicken and bread.

Tip: You can squeeze the garlic out of its skin and spread on the chicken or bread.

Upcoming Job Events and Resources

San Francisco's HIREvent

Tuesday, December 3

Noon — 4 p.m.

Hotel Whitcomb

1231 Market Street, San Francisco

Free admission

East Bay Career Fair

Wednesday, December 11

11 a.m.

Crowne Plaza Hotel

45 John Glenn Drive, Concord

Free to attend

San Jose Career Fair

Thursday, December 12

11 a.m.— 2 p.m.

Doubletree Hotel

2050 Gateway Place, San Jose

Free, registration required

San Francisco Career Fair

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

11 a.m.— 2p.m.

Holiday Inn, Fisherman's Wharf

1300 Columbus Ave, San Francisco

Free to attend

EDD Questions Answered

Ongoing Assistance

Mon — Fri, 8 a.m.— 5 p.m.

Peninsula Works

1200 O'Brien Drive, Menlo Park

(650) 688-6335

Free

Job Searching on the Internet for Beginners

Ongoing Assistance

10:30 a.m.— noon

Eden One-Stop Career Center

24100 Amador St, Hayward

Call (510) 888-7100 for dates

Free

John Montgomery

(Continued from page 1)

mates, adding that being around people who had been through similar experiences and were figuring things out at the same time helped take much of the stress out of the recovery process.

After starting with the Foundations for Recovery program in Menlo Park, Montgomery spent 30 days in detox. He went straight into a PTSD group, where he said he started learning new ways to deal with the anger and anxiety he was feeling. A

mindfulness program he took part in at Stanford taught him ways to stop kicking himself for things that happened four decades ago and to start loving himself.

From there, he moved into HVRP, which Montgomery calls another "godsend" in his recovery. While in the program, he learned to let go of what he could not control while taking charge of things he has power to change.

"When I was able to start thinking clearly, I realized I didn't need to talk so much — I needed to start listening," he said. "I can't blame everything on what happened in 1969. I finally started liking myself."

His journey then brought him to CWT, where he moved into the TR house and found the structured environment he needed to step up his recovery. As he described it, it felt like things were finally falling into place.

"Through HVRP and CWT, I feel like I was able to have my mind opened up," he said explaining that the programs have taught him new ways to solve his problems and cope with obstacles that may come up. "I don't think there's always a cure, but there is a way to deal with it."

Montgomery also said he has enjoyed being someone that his housemates feel comfortable talking to without being judged, and that gaining their trust and confidence has helped him in the process of liking himself.

"Through my drug abuse and alcohol addiction, I lost a lot of trust over the years," he explained. "I'm comfortable

with the guys [in the program]. We've put ourselves in situations over the years that we can relate to. I like that feeling of being trusted."

House Manager Eric Jackson said that Montgomery has been an inspirational figure in the house, explaining that when he first moved in he was quiet, but soon began to take charge and become more vocal.

"He didn't isolate himself," Jackson explained. "Everything John was supposed to do, he did, and more. He led by example."

Although he is moving into his own apartment this month, Montgomery, a self-described socialite, said it's important to him to not become isolated from the program and his friends in it. As part of his relapse prevention program, he will take part in a mentorship program that works with veterans in Santa Clara who are incarcerated or have appointments with a judge, offering counseling and support once a month.

He is also in the process of applying for part-time work in logistics at PAD. Keeping part-time work is important, Montgomery said, because he wants to stay as involved as possible in CWT programs and activities, like playing softball with alumni, as well as continue with his current support groups like Narcotics Anonymous. He is also looking forward to mentoring incoming veterans in the Big Brother program at HVRP.

Another goal Montgomery is excited to pursue is raising bulls, an idea he has had for the past 10 years. He is currently looking into a VA Small Business Loan in order to acquire the specific breed of bulls he wants, which come from Italy and are known to be from the best bloodlines.

Montgomery considers all these plans and activities to be valuable parts of his recovery. He said that he has a plan for the next six months, and knows that although it may not always be smooth sailing, he feels better prepared to deal with things as they come.

"Even if there are bumps in the road, I'm not worried about it," he said, explaining that his work with the VA has made him more ready to accept and conquer difficulties. "I'm tickled to death about the direction I'm headed. I'm not afraid of it."

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CARF 2013

(Continued from page 1)

ment their transition into the community.

Dr. Kiewlich praised the CWT staff for their work to achieve certification, saying “we couldn’t have done it without the team effort.” She added that the long hours and hard work everyone in CWT put in showed their commitment to the program.

“I’m really thankful the staff was so accommodating in order to make this happen,” she said.

Other areas that CARF surveyors expressed accolades for include CWT’s use of outreach materials and publications, use of technological resources, cleanliness and convenience of offices and patient residences, reception to client feedback, testing of emergency procedures and integration of all of its complementary programs.

Surveyors gave praise to CWT employees’ continued commitment to veterans even after program completion, noting their creative ways of keeping alumni connected, such as the annual holiday party. Another example surveyors cited of this maintained connection is the range of careers within the VA available to clients.

They also praised CWT’s commitment to ensuring that veterans play a crucial role in creating their own plans and goals, and for keeping them on track in their plans by completing a 30-day goal review.

This year’s survey marked the first year that the Homeless Veterans Supported Employment Program was part of the accreditation process. HVSEP Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist Willa Houston said that the process was intense, but showed how important documentation is to earning accreditation.

“I felt like I was going to the parole board,” she joked, explaining that although they felt well prepared, not knowing exactly what questions would be asked was daunting.

Houston said that one of the crucial parts of the survey was having written proof to back up their work. “I think the most important thing for me is documentation,” she explained, adding that she now takes notes on every part of each case.

Accreditation lasts for three years, meaning that the next time CWT undergoes a CARF survey will be July 2016.

CWT Staff

Robin Braxton, M.Ed., CRC
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist

Jesus Cuenca
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist, Gilbert Ave. House Manager

Lina Denny, M.Ed., CPRP
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist

Danielle DeNuve
Program Support Assistant

Kameela Din
Technical Writer

Sharrel Frazier
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist

Willa Houston
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist

Leon Hudgens
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist

Eric Jackson
Eighteenth Ave. House Manager

Matthew Johnson
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist

Dustin Kieschnick
Technical Writer

Stephanie Kiewlich, Psy.D., CPRP
PAVE Program Manager

Scott Kurosad
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist

Jesse Lee
Job Developer

Keith Newby, CPRP
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist, VISN 21 Mentor Trainer

Hedva Porat, D.Crim.
Employment Development and Community Relations Coordinator

Ron Robinson, M.Ed., CRC
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist

Amekia Sims
Psychology Student Trainee

J.R. Skelton, M.Ed.
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist

Stephanie J. Wong, Ph.D.
Clinical Coordinator, Staff Psychologist

iotaGift Connects Givers with Those in Need

Need some help getting a new pair of shoes for a job interview? Looking for a way to help someone in need this holiday season and beyond?

***iotaGift** lets those who need help getting an everyday item, like a new winter coat or items for school, connect with people looking to lend a helping hand. Users can post and donate anonymously.*

*Check out **iotaGift.com** and list “CWT” as your referral source when requesting an item.*

CWT Newsletter Staff

Writer/Editor

Kameela Din

Copy Editors

Robin Braxton, Dustin Kieschnick

Program Director

Stephanie Kiewlich, Psy.D.

2013 Holiday Guide

The holiday season has begun, and although we may not get snow, there is no shortage of events to celebrate the season in the Bay Area. Below are a few free or low cost events to help you get out and get social this winter.

* **Embarcadero Winter Carnival and Building Lighting**

Friday, November 22, 4 pm – 7pm
Embarcadero Center, San Francisco
A free-to-attend family carnival featuring children's activities, entertainment and appearances by Santa, followed by the annual lighting of all four iconic waterfront buildings. While there, strap on some skates and hit the ice at the Embarcadero's seasonal ice skating rink. Adult rink admission is \$10, while skate rentals are \$4.



* **Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony**

Friday, November 29, 6 pm – 8pm
Union Square, San Francisco
Enjoy free live music and dance performances as a crowd gathers to watch a giant fir get lit up in the heart of the city.

* **Holidays on Fourth Street**

Saturdays and Sundays, November 24 – December 23, Noon – 4pm
1776 Fourth Street (across from Peet's Coffee), Berkeley
Take part in a different holiday-themed craft session each weekend, from making glass ornaments

to decorating with pine cones. Free to attend.

* **Downtown Ice**

Daily, November 15 – January 12, Hours vary
Circle of Palms, 120 S. Market Street, San Jose
Make some rounds in Downtown San Jose's seasonal ice rink, then check out the free "Christmas in the Park" festivities across the street. Admission ranges from \$15 to \$17, depending on the day.

* **Fourth Annual Chanukah Festival**

Tuesday, December 3, 5:15 pm
In front of the Court House on Broadway, Redwood City
Holiday music and Chanukah treats will keep onlookers occupied as volunteers construct a giant Menorah made of Legos. Festival is free to attend, but donations or volunteering is encouraged.

* **Hometown Holidays**

Saturday, December 7, 10 am – 6pm
Downtown Redwood City
Enjoy free music, ice sculpture demonstrations, artificial snow, a carnival, tree lighting and fireworks. Free to attend, donations of new and unwrapped toys are encouraged.



Vocational Services Holiday Party—December 11

This year's holiday party will take place on December 11, from 4 pm to 6 pm, in the CORE Building Gymnasium, and will feature:

- Gifts for veterans
- Awards for top employers
- Food and beverages
- Toys for Tots toy drive



Bring a toy for donation and receive a raffle ticket for this year's mystery prize.

Fitness Challenge*(Continued from page 1)*

those decisions. A tally was kept of those points and each house competed against the other for the most points, with the house with the highest average of points at the end winning.

Chin said that the idea for the program sprung out of a need to give residents plans for more structure in their down time, like weekends and after work, as well as to provide guidance on healthy eating habits and to inspire more

team cohesion amongst the houses.

"I gave them a breakdown of why it's important to structure free time once the [TR] program ends," Chin explained. "They need to find ways to de-stress or they will explode. [The challenge] was a reminder that recreation is a part of recovery."

Points were given for a variety of activities, ranging from exercising and purchasing healthy food to visiting community resource centers, sleeping between seven and nine hours a night and signing up for a library card. Participants could also gain extra points for doing any of these activities with another house member, adding social value to the experience.

Chin said that while some residents showed resistance to the challenge at first, quite a few told him that they were changing their eating habits and feeling better halfway through the program.

"The nutritional goal stuck with the most people," Chin said, adding that after residents started to show improvement in their dietary habits, the goal became sustaining those habits.

TR resident John Montgomery said

that while implementing the changes in diet was the hardest part of the fitness challenge for him, he found that he started drinking more water and choosing healthier snack options as the weeks progressed.

"Instead of snacking on chips, I started snacking on things like blueberries, strawberries and nuts," said Montgomery, who lost seven pounds over the course of the challenge.

In addition to the overall challenge and competition, Chin, program case managers and house managers met with the houses three times a

month, either for group dinners featuring healthy food choices, or to compete in one-off challenges for specific prizes, like free laundry detergent for a month for the winning house. Challenges

included physical and mental/social challenges, such as bocce ball, charades and Pictionary.

Many residents noted that the weekly challenges helped keep them motivated because of the friendly competition they inspired.

"Having the competitive aspect created a kind of house pride," said TR resident Gaston Daugherty. "Having been in the military and through boot camp, you want to come out on top."

Like many of his housemates, TR resident Alan Rangel said that his favorite part of the fitness challenge was the physical aspect, particularly the game challenges, like bocce ball and charades. Rangel added that the challenge

provided a nice break from the usual routine of house meetings, and that he would like to see the program continue on in the future.

One goal that the fitness challenge was geared toward was bringing about greater team cohesion amongst TR residents. Rangel spoke of that goal, saying that the challenge helped strengthen the bond between housemates. He explained that although it was tough at times to follow through with the program, "it helps when you see other people in the house doing it."

Phillip Cannon, who will soon be leaving his TR home to move into his own apartment, agreed that an already strong connection among housemates only grew stronger throughout the challenge. Cannon said the habits that the challenge aimed to enforce will likely stick with him now that it is over.

"All these things are going to benefit me once I move out," he said, adding that he now finds himself biking when he would have taken the bus and drinking more water than he used to.

Phillip's brother, Jeffrey, who lives

in one of the TR houses, said that he has joined the VA MOVE! Program to keep the healthy habits going beyond the house fitness challenge.

"I want to keep it up," he said, add-

ing that the program did more than just get people active – it helped change some attitudes about health and fitness. "It's really a way of thinking."



TR community members pose with Dr. Wong and House Manager Jesus Cuenca.

PHOTO: KAMELA DIN



Dr. Kiewlich alongside House Manager Eric Jackson and TR community members.

PHOTO: KAMELA DIN

10 Common Interview Questions & How to Answer Them

Going into a job interview unprepared is like getting on stage without knowing your lines. The best way to set yourself up for success is to rehearse your answers to potential interview questions. Forbes, Simply Hired, US News and Monster.com outlined a few of the most common questions job seekers face in interviews. Below are some common questions, along with ideas on how to prepare for each question, and how to answer to impress.

1. Tell me about yourself.

While it may be tempting to go into your life's story, try to limit the personal information to things that are relevant to the job. Highlight personality traits that will transfer into job skills, and describe past experiences that show how you might be a strong worker.

2. Why did you leave your last job?

Don't focus on negatives that may have led you to leave your last job, and avoid rants against old bosses or co-workers.

Instead, describe why you were eager to pursue new opportunities and advance your career.

3. Why do you want to work for us?

Here's where the research comes in: find out as much as you can about the company or organization beforehand so you can give as specific an answer as possible. Interviewers like to know that candidates have put in some effort and have a genuine interest in a position.

4. Explain gaps in employment.

Be honest here. Maybe an injury, family problems or other circumstances held you back in the past. Tell employers why you are now ready to move forward and create a new start, and how that dedication will make you a great worker.

5. What makes you qualified for this job?

Highlight strengths from your past that may translate into skills related to that job. This VA website has tools to help you translate military skills into civilian job skills: https://www.vetsuccess.va.gov/public/military_skills_translators.html

6. Tell me about a difficult/challenging situation at work and how you handled it.

It can be hard to think on your feet so have a situation in mind that exemplifies your problem solving abilities.

7. What is your greatest strength? Weakness?

Being candid and specific is a great way to avoid the clichés of "I'm a hard worker" or "My biggest weakness is that I care too much." Phrase weaknesses as things you are trying to improve upon, rather than pitfalls.

8. Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Interviewers want to know that you have goals, and that this job will not be just a paycheck to you. Make sure you have goals in mind and that you can relate them to the position you are applying for.

9. Why should we hire you?

Use your past to your advantage: Highlight how your military career prepared you to be the loyal, team-oriented, goal-driven employee they are looking for.

10. What questions do you have for me?

Asking questions shows that you have a real interest in the job. If you can't think of anything to ask, ask the interviewer to elaborate on something they talked about earlier.

